



SCOTT WALKER
GOVERNOR ELECT
STATE OF WISCONSIN

November 9, 2010

Ray LaHood, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary LaHood:

I appreciate the information contained your letter dated November 8th. I most appreciate the reversal of your previous statements that "high-speed rail is coming to Wisconsin. There's no stopping it."

Wisconsin has significant transportation needs. I believe it is a grave mistake for the federal government to insist on building an unwanted passenger rail system at a time when our roads and bridges are literally crumbling.

Wisconsin's road needs are well documented. In 2006, the Joint Legislative Committee on Transportation Needs and Finance found an annual \$700 million shortfall in transportation funding to keep up with needed repairs and expansions. In 2008, the non-partisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau updated this annual shortfall to well over \$1 billion. When local governments were asked to submit transportation projects for approval under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), they were told they'd be competing for \$158.7 million in funds. Wisconsin local governments instead submitted \$658.2 million in requests.

Wisconsin's Transportation Projects Commission recently approved four new major highway projects. These include the I39/90 expansion, the widening of State Highway 38, the reconstruction of US 10/WIS 441, and the expansion of Wisconsin Highway 15. These four projects alone are estimated to cost more than \$1.3 billion.

Wisconsin also faces major future challenges in the reconstruction of the Zoo Interchange in Milwaukee County and the repairs of the Hoan Bridge in the City of Milwaukee. The Zoo Interchange, Wisconsin's most traveled, is estimated to cost more than \$1 billion alone.

Rail projects such as the one proposed in Wisconsin are notorious for inefficiency and cost overruns. In Ohio, the so-called high speed rail line from Cincinnati to Cleveland is expected to average only 50 miles per hour. In California, news reports indicate the original cost estimate for its passenger rail line has ballooned from \$33.6 billion to \$42.6 billion. Wisconsin simply cannot afford this level of inefficiency and fiscal uncertainty.

More than 60 years ago, the federal government had the foresight to recognize that the American people no longer wanted to be limited by fixed-track passenger rail. The massive investment in our federal interstate highway system spurred the greatest economic expansion in our nation's history. For us to now to go backwards on transportation makes little sense. I believe that continuing responsible investments in our road infrastructure is a key to growing our economy and creating jobs.

I strongly encourage the federal government to halt all investments in new passenger rail lines and instead devote this funding to state and local road projects. All across the country, in states like Wisconsin, Ohio and Florida, the voters chose new governors who are opposed to diverting transportation funding to passenger rail. I believe it would be unwise for the Obama Administration to ignore the will of the voters.

Sincerely,



Scott Walker
Governor-Elect
State of Wisconsin